

**OFFICER DELEGATION SCHEME  
RECORD OF OPERATIONAL DECISION**



**TO BE UPLOADED TO THE INTERNET BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

<b>Date:</b> 26/6/20	<b>Ref No:</b> 195
<b>Type of Operational Decision:</b>	
<b>Executive Decision</b> <input style="width: 100px; text-align: center;" type="text" value="Y"/>	<b>Council Decision</b> <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
<b>Status:</b> For publication	
<b>Title/Subject matter:</b> Re-opening Libraries and Archives	
<b>Budget/Strategy/Policy/Compliance</b> – Is the decision:	
(i) within an Approved Budget	Y
(ii) in accordance with Council Policy	Y
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b> [Does this decision change policy, procedure or working practice or negatively impact on a group of people? <b>If yes</b> – complete EIA and summarise issues identified and recommendations – forward EIA to Corporate HR]	No negative impact

## Details of Operational Decision Taken *[with reasons]*:

### 1. Current service status

The service was closed to the public on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March. We are continuing to provide our online offer to customers and developing new ways to access the service. 24 Libraries & Archives staff are currently working on the Community Hubs (the service has 33 members of staff with the vast majority employed on a part time basis).

The Government has indicated that that Councils will be allowed to open Libraries from the 4<sup>th</sup> July subject to local decision.

Libraries Connected (Heads of Service Network) have developed a toolkit in conjunction with DCMS to support reopening. They recommend a phased recovery that reflects available resources, staff, risk assessments and community need. They outline a 5 step pathway to recovery and in Bury it is proposed we begin our recovery by introducing steps 2 & 3. We are currently at step 1:

1. Digital & remote services. Staff working from home. No public access to buildings.
2. Digital & remote plus reintroduction of the Home Delivery Service (deliveries to housebound residents). Many staff working from home. No public access to buildings.
3. Digital & remote, home delivery. Introduction of order & collect service (for library books) and ticketed IT access. Some staff still working at home. Extremely limited public access to buildings. Library opening hours limited, number of libraries open limited.

### 2. Suggested timeline

Two of the four libraries (**Radcliffe & Ramsbottom**) will remain as **Community Hubs** until such time as they are released. **For Bury and Prestwich Libraries we are proposing a phased reopening** that will allow us to open safely following the guidelines; support the staff in their return to work and allow some library staff to continue to support the community hubs if required.

We will unlock one library at a time and will review this timeline and unlocking schedule regularly.

Week beginning 6<sup>th</sup> July – senior staff on site. Review buildings and layouts, complete risk assessments, finalise proposals for reopening. Communications developed.

Communications will be essential in our unlocking process as public expectation may be high.

Week beginning 13<sup>th</sup> July – Library staff return, induction to new procedures and processes. Review working patterns to allow for social distancing.

Week beginning 20<sup>th</sup> July - Libraries start to receive returned items which will be quarantined for 72 hours. No public access to buildings. Orders begin to be taken and prepared for click and collect; calls made to home delivery service users regarding the return of that service. Public reopening messages released.

Week beginning 27<sup>th</sup> July - Click and collect and Home Delivery services begin.

Week beginning 3<sup>rd</sup> August - pre-booked IT sessions begin. (Depending on progress we may bring this date forward).

### **3. Service proposals**

#### **Click and collect – books can be requested online or by telephone and can be picked up from one collection point at the front of each library**

- Collection times to be introduced to control numbers of people coming to the buildings (e.g. 10-12; 2-4). Staff can work safely in libraries and will be encouraged to stagger shift patterns to help observe social distancing measures.
- This could affect vulnerable and disadvantaged users initially before book browsing returns.
- Different solutions will be required for different buildings depending on layout.
- Going forward we hope to offer time limited browsing, we will continue the click and collect service to support those residents who do not feel comfortable accessing public spaces.

#### **Computer access – access to computers for our digitally excluded members has been a key issue during lockdown and we want to be able to offer safe access to this service**

- A restricted number of computers could be made available in strictly controlled areas.
- Social distancing and cleaning regime measures at all times.
- Some reconfiguring of building layout may be required to allow quarantined areas.
- Computers to be pre-booked to control numbers and allow cleaning times for equipment between users.
- Provision of hand cleaning stations for the public.
- One member of staff or cleaning staff if available required at all times.

#### **Home Delivery Service**

- This service is currently suspended, it provides a delivery of library materials to housebound people.
- Operated using the Library Service van (currently loaned back to Transport) and a driver hired from Cleaning Services (the post is currently vacant, recruitment paused due to COVID outbreak). There is the potential to use a member of library staff to deliver this service.
- Quarantining process required for returned items.
- Social distancing and cleaning regimes to be observed at all times.

#### **Archives – there is the possibility that this service cannot reopen if the Museum remains closed**

- Operated in the basement of the Art Gallery and Museum complex this service offers both a walk in and appointment based service.
- If the Museum reopens then we would need to decide if this service could be opened safely to the public
- Any public access would require strict social distancing and quarantining of any items handled.
- Public use of computers would require managing and the introduction of strict cleaning regimes.

- We currently offer a paid research request service; this could be remodelled to allow for general enquiries to be made with telephone/video appointments rather than physical ones.
- Recovery guidance for the sector is provided by The National Archives

#### 4. Service considerations

##### Staffing


- $\frac{3}{4}$  of library staff are currently working on Community Hubs including several key staff. Whilst a phased reopening of libraries could allow a number of library staff to remain with the hubs a significant number will need to be released.
- Some of our service wide roles could temporarily be reassigned to support the reopening of libraries.
- The majority of library staff are part time and will need support and reassurance in returning to work after a long period away.

##### Buildings

- Ramsbottom and Radcliffe Libraries are currently designated as Community Hubs and will remain so.
- Hubs currently operating mostly virtually but require some physical space (storage and office space). This can be accommodated when the buildings are returned with click & collect service in operation.
- Some reconfiguring of building layout may be required to support click & collect and IT provision
- All items returned will need to be quarantined for 72 hours before being reissued. We're investigating crate hire to support this.
- Increased involvement required from Cleaning Services.
- Access to public toilets dependant on cleaning provision and may have to be removed from operation
- Use of staffrooms and staff offices subject to risk assessment.

##### Other

- Resource Services – this section of the Library service deals with new stock. At the time of writing there are no plans from suppliers to recommence deliveries with suppliers storing stock until we return.
- Community groups, events and outside agencies – whilst the physical space that Libraries provide help to meet the needs of our most disadvantaged and isolated residents we cannot open those spaces fully until we can be sure it is safe to do so.

Decision taken by:	Signature:	Date:
Executive Director or Chief/Senior Officer		26/6/20
<b>Members Consulted [see note 1 below]</b>		

Cabinet Member/Chair		
Lead Member		
Opposition Spokesperson		

**Notes**

1. It is not generally a requirement to consult with any Members on Operational Decisions but where a Chief Officer considers it necessary to consult with the appropriate Cabinet Member and/or Lead Member, they must sign the form so as to confirm that they have been consulted and that they agree with the proposed action. The signature of the Opposition Spokesperson should be obtained to confirm that he/she has been consulted.
2. **This form must not be used for urgent decisions.**